

## friends by caffeinescripts

**Series:** after 1983 [1]

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** (but thats an idea for another fanfic wink wink), F/M, also steve makes a guest appearance in this i hope hes in character, anyways enjoy!!, btw this is supposed to be canon compliant so like its all supposed to take place in '83 :), i promise im working on something post canon next!!!, i tried to make him likable yet true to canon w/ nancy so :), so mikes a hardcore shipper sorry not sorry he would be

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Jonathan Byers, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington

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**Summary:**

She waited (a month).

...It'd been two weeks. Two weeks since they'd found Will, two weeks since they fought a monster from the Upside Down, two weeks since they lost Eleven. Two weeks since Jonathan had almost said something to her on his couch. Two weeks and she'd barely even talked to him since then, it was like he disappeared. It only made her more determined to stay patient.

## friends

### Author's Note:

so this thanksgiving im grateful for my jancy endgame. (& my natarlie one, they're so adorable!!) anyways, this takes place in 1983, and it's basically a snapshot of the month nancy waited for jonathan.

also, this was originally supposed to be a two shot but i'm not sure when part 2 will be written & this can stand alone so enjoy!

dedicated to my sisters jackie & geena, but they know that.

Nancy flopped on her bed, meticulously inspecting her homework she was currently in the middle of doing. Text books sprawled in front of her as she stuck her sheets of paper in a random notebook, getting up again fully prepared to start reading again when her own hand caught her attention. More specifically, her cut.

It'd been two weeks. Two weeks since they'd found Will, two weeks since they fought a monster from the Upside Down, two weeks since they lost Eleven. Two weeks since Jonathan had *almost* said something to her on his couch. Two weeks and she'd barely even talked to him since then, it was like he...disappeared. It only made her more determined to stay patient. Unlike her, he got Will back and she knew how much they needed each other right now.

But where did that leave her? She wasn't going to lie, she missed him. She didn't even think that was possible considering about two weeks and a few days ago she paid him no attention. But when they went through something traumatic, she somehow bonded with him. It was strange but their lives were now. And she just really wanted to know what he was going to say on that couch before Steve interrupted.

Steve. That seemed to be all Steve was doing, interrupting. That sounded harsh, because he really had the best of intentions now, but

Nancy's mind was too preoccupied with Jonathan to go back to the girl that cared about if she should curl or straighten her hair for Steve's date. But, he really wanted to get back together and to prove to her he changed. She was blindsided when he showed up at her door with roses and apologies a week ago. She couldn't blame him either though, she did feel closer to him since they fought the demogorgon together as well. But she couldn't bring herself to get back together with him, despite how much he apologized for what he did. She had to know what was lingering with Jonathan.

She jumped, the sound of her phone ringing pulling her out of her thoughts. She sighed, there was about a 90% chance it was Steve, but she couldn't help the tugging bit of hope it was Jonathan, at least trying to talk to her. Besides seeing him dropping off and picking up Will, she barely saw him. Awkward 'hello's and 'how are you doing?'s at school, but that was it.

"It's not him." a voice startled her, not noticing Mike appearing in her doorway. "He just came and picked up Will like, five minutes ago, there's no way he's home yet."

"Oh." Nancy nodded, trying not to look too disappointed. Was this the level she was on now? Her little brother feeling sorry for her? She really was pathetic. "Thanks." She mumbled.

"No problem." He replied just as glumly, but made no movement from her doorway.

"Is everything okay?" She tried not to sound like the old Nancy that wanted nothing to do with her younger brother. She was genuinely concerned about him, she knew losing El hit him hard, despite how happy he was to have Will back. In a way, they both lost someone. She wondered idly if this not arguing aspect to their relationship would last.

"Yeah, yeah." He nodded unconvincingly. "Just, maybe try, giving him some time..?" Mike suggested, Nancy ducked her head down.

"I'm trying." She tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "I will." She tacked on, still not meeting his eyes.

“Good.” Mike was starting to say when the phone rang behind Nancy again, causing her to roll her eyes. “He needs you too.” Mike finished, leaving Nancy alone with her thoughts for just a moment, wondering how her baby brother got to be so insightful, since when he started caring about her feelings. Before she could think about it too much, she groaned, giving in and grabbing the phone to talk to Steve for the night.

That was the way it was. Nancy wondered if she’d ever see him again, considering Will was under very severe watch and they still didn’t *really* know what was wrong with him. There were doctors appointments and meetings with the Chief, Nancy wouldn’t blame him for not having enough time to think about her.

It kind of sucked though. Nancy sighed as she walked through the school corridor, hugging her books while she walked towards her locker. There was nothing but excitement in the air, this being their last week of school before Christmas break. It was shown by kids cramming for finals as they walked to class or kids who are going to fail because they already decided their break has started. She was indifferent to it as she pushed her combination on the dial of her locker. As she opened the door, she was somewhat startled when a body came up to lean next to hers.

“Hey Nance!” Steve grinned down at her as she exchanged her books.

“Oh, Hey Steve,” She gave him a polite smile. “What’s up?”

“Not much, but I have a question for you. Do you have plans after school today?” Nancy only raised an eyebrow as she shook her head tentatively. “Okay, what do you say we hang out together after school? We can do whatever you want, you know, go to the movies or, anything. What do you want to do?”

However, as Steve spoke Nancy’s attention shifted from him to a familiar boy walking down the hallway. “Jonathan?” She asked aloud, earning a confused look from Steve as she spoke.

He turned around though, “Would you look at that...do we even know the last time he’s been to school?”

"I don't know," Nancy mumbled. It was a lie, he was here last Thursday. She remembered because she waved at him in the hallway before the bell rang, not that it mattered. He missed a lot recently due to taking care of Will, and it looked like administration was giving him a free pass for the rest of the year (courtesy of the chief she was sure). "Sorry, I gotta go Steve." She said hurriedly, slamming her locker shut. "I'll, uh, talk to you later." She offered him one last smile as she followed the boy around the corner, not giving him another glance.

"Hey Jonathan!" She called, causing him to turn around.

"Nancy, hey." He smiled, and despite herself, she did too.

"What's up? How are you, doing?" She waded through her words, somewhat shy now that he was actually in front of her, forcing him to talk to her. "I haven't seen you in...forever, it feels."

"Oh, um, I'm okay." He stumbled through his own words, obviously lying. "How are you doing?"

Nancy licked her lips. She wasn't mad he was lying, she was mad he was lying to *her*. They were supposed to be friends, and according to Mike and his gang the golden rule of friendship was that friends don't lie to each other. "Good. Thanks." She nodded, biting down on her lip. Jonathan nodded as she did, the awkward "we're both not saying what we're really thinking" feeling lingering in the air was enough to choke her. But she had no idea what to do about it. "Well, it's good to see you." She tried, but she spoke without really thinking it through before he could reply. "Jonathan, you know you can talk to me, right?"

"Yeah, yeah, of course I know that Nancy." He looked like he genuinely meant what he said too, which just confused Nancy more.

"Then why don't you?" She tried not to look hurt when she asked but it was one of the many things bothering her. In his defense, it's not like she was calling him or showing up at his door to spill her feelings. But it was different with her (she told herself), he was too busy for that.

"I-" Jonathan faltered, genuinely not having an answer for her. He couldn't tell her he stayed away from her, afraid every time she looked at him she'd think of the worst week of their lives. He didn't want to tell her he was trying to give her space after everything that happened, after losing Barb. That even though he was busy, he saw Steve with her, basically begging for a second chance. That they were bound to get back together, and life would go back to normal.

"You know what," Nancy said after a moment, Jonathan clearly struggling to answer. "Forget about it. This has been the craziest few weeks of our entire lives, I'm not gonna interrogate you about why you don't really talk to me. But, you can." A smile played on Nancy's lips now. "Like it or not Jonathan Byers, you have a friend." She bumped her shoulder against his lightly.

Jonathan actually laughed, grateful the tension was gone. "I'm not opposed to having friends." She hummed, giving him a look. "Fine, but I am glad it's you." Nancy brightened at his words, glad he was actually talking to her.

She now genuinely smiled. "Good. Plus, I know how you can make it up to me."

"Oh, yeah? How?"

"By having lunch with me today." She shrugged, now walking down the hall in sync with him. As if on cue, the bell rang as he nodded. "Meet me by my locker later." She ordered him as she gave him one last smile as she walked off in the direction of her class, her heart beating just a little bit faster.

The next several hours dragged on by, Nancy not really interested in paying attention to her lectures. Sure, finals might kick her ass but she couldn't be bothered to think about physics when she was finally spending time with Jonathan again. Not like three weeks had been a long time, but it felt like it to her. She practically ran out of third period and to her locker, surprised to already see him there.

"Hey," She greeted him, arching an eyebrow as she opened her locker.

“Hey, uh, Mr. Baker let us out early.” She nodded, understanding.

“Well, where do you want to eat?”

They decided to eat outside on the hood of Jonathan’s car, more privacy that way to where nosy tenth graders wouldn’t be able to eavesdrop on their conversations about killing a monster from a different dimension (and then report them to the counselor or spread rumors about them both being clinically insane). Not that Nancy even knew what to say or how to start up said conversation, considering her mind was racing a mile a minute and her hands were shaking slightly. It was also somewhat cold considering it was December in Indiana, but Nancy ignored that and curled into her sweater more to avoid the chill as she ate her grapes. It wasn’t supposed to start snowing until next week anyway.

Nancy looked around for a few moments, thinking of something to strike up a conversation about. She wrung her hands around, only stopping when she felt pain in her palm. Her cut, which was now bandaged up and would shape up to be a nice scar. She hummed, causing Jonathan to look over at her.

“What?” He chuckled.

“Nothing.” She shook her head. “How’s yours?” She asked, gesturing to her hand. He laughed, putting his out as well. His was clumsily wrapped up, she assumed Will did it.

“Never better. Yours?” He smiled.

She shrugged. “Never better.” A smile broke out on her face as well.

And after a few moments, they picked up conversation surprisingly easily. Jonathan started to tell her about mix tapes he made for Will, since he didn’t have a camera anymore (giving Nancy an idea for a Christmas present), he’d been listening to a lot more music and reading more books. Nancy gave him some suggestions as well, considering she happened to like reading as a hobby. Every once in awhile there was a beat of silence as they struggled with the surrealism of the whole situation, them talking about normal things and not hunting monsters. But they never lasted long, mainly because

the silence became too unbearable for Nancy so she spoke up about whatever was on her mind.

“Mike told me Will’s doing better.” She broke the last pause quite easily with her statement, but her tone made it sound more like a question.

“Yeah, yeah. He’s doing way better now,” Jonathan ducked his head. “At first, he wasn’t. It was like...he was a different person.” He explained as Nancy listened with concern evident in her eyes. “But now, thanks to the doctors I think, it’s like he’s back to his old self again.”

Nancy smiled as Jonathan did, the relief he was feeling was evident by the look on his face as he talked about his brother. Nancy felt something deep inside pull at her, almost wishing she was that close with Mike, she brushed it off though. “Well it has to help him having you around.” She shrugged, not admitting to herself she was recalling from personal experience. Except she’d been in the Upside Down for about 15 minutes and she was clinging onto Jonathan for the rest of the night basically, she couldn’t imagine what Will was going through. She, luckily, didn’t have to though as Jonathan kept the conversation going.

“How’s Mike doing? Have there been any clues about what happened to...?” He lowered his voice as he asked.

“Eleven? No.” She looked to her hands in her lap now. “Mike, he’s really upset about it, but he still thinks she’s out there, that she’s okay. I hope she is, not only for her sake but his.” The concern for her younger brother was now obvious, but it’s not like Mike would talk to her about this kind of stuff anyway.

“Maybe she is.” He shrugged, and Nancy did too. As odd as it sounded, it felt good to talk about this stuff. She didn’t really have anyone to talk about it with, and it sort of weighing on her. Jonathan must’ve noticed something on her mind.

“Are you okay?” He asked with genuine worry.

“Huh? Oh yeah,” Nancy tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. “It’s



just...I haven't really talked about what happened much."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset you--"

"No, no. It's okay. It's actually good. No one really wants to talk about it, but I feel like sometimes I need to."

Jonathan nodded, understanding the weight behind her words. Everyone wanted everything to go back to normal somehow. As if that was even possible, Nancy wouldn't even know where to begin and she suspected the same of Jonathan. But they were actively going against everything that used to be normal by just talking to each other.

Here she was, having lunch with Jonathan Byers. Something a month ago Nancy would've never even considered, despite how friendly they were because of their brothers. She chuckled despite herself at the thought.

"What?" Jonathan asked, now lighthearted.

"Nothing, nothing. It's just...isn't it crazy how everything happened? Like, last month, we didn't even know each other! And now, here we are..." She smiled as she spoke, Jonathan following.

"Being friends?" He finished for her.

She met his eyes now as she nodded. "Yeah. Friends." She affirmed. Her heart beat just a little bit faster though. Was that all they were?

There was a beat as they both took in each others words, each other's presence.

"Hey, Nancy?" Jonathan mumbled, and Nancy looked up at him beneath her eyelashes. He had a similar expression on his face as he did on their moment on his couch and suddenly this was it, her heart was racing.

"Yeah?" Her reply was barely audible, she was too busy trying to read him with her eyes. This was all too much, she felt excited and nervous but more than anything she was curious and just wanted to know what he was going to say.

"I-" Jonathan started, only to be cut off by shouting across the courtyard. Both their heads turned to the sound that was only a idiot jock being stupid with his friends. Nancy would go strangle him if she didn't have hope Jonathan was going to continue.

"What were you going to say?" She asked softly, desperately trying to bring back the moment that was now gone. He could still say it, they could still have their moment.

"I'm, uh, just wanted to say thanks. You know, you were such a help a few weeks ago and for..." he trailed off. "Anyway, I, uh, I appreciate it." He finished hurriedly, not looking anymore. Nancy let her shoulders drop, just knowing that wasn't what he was actually planning to say.

"Yeah, yeah, of course." She pressed her lips together though, determined to get his actual confession out of him. Slowly, she reached to take his hand in hers. "Jonathan, are you sure-" And as if fate couldn't be anymore against them, the bell rang now, interrupting her and causing him to jump. It's not like she cared though, none of this stuff was more important than Jonathan confessing to her even though she feared they missed that opportunity. She suppressed an eye roll before she spoke again, still looking at him in that gentle way she did before. "Jonathan, are you sure that's what you were going to say?" They were so close now, maybe she should just lean in and just kiss him and have all this bullshit be over with.

Still, she waited for him to speak. She could tell there was doubt and clouded judgment in his eyes. "Yeah, yeah, I'm sure Nancy." He met her eyes briefly, giving her nothing but a fake smile she could see right through. He squeezed her hand to confirm and she repressed the urge to actually groan now, how much more obvious could she be? He really didn't think he wasn't good enough for her, that she should get back with Steve, did he? Did he really think she was that shallow suburban girl archetype she hated?

Or maybe, he was never going to confess to her. Maybe he was just genuinely happy to have a friend, considering it didn't seem like he had one before. Maybe that was all he saw Nancy as. (Maybe that's what she told herself). She tried not to let her hopeful expression fall

so quickly, but she had a feeling she looked disappointed. "You sure?" She asked still, inching away from him now to collect her things. He was as well.

"Yeah, yeah. Thanks Nancy." He smiled one more time, and she gave him one too that didn't quite reach her eyes. She saw him longing to say more just by looking in his eyes.

"Okay." She nodded, not believing him as she untangled their hands, instantly feeling cold where his hand was. Still, she packed up her things. "Well, I have to get to class, and I know you do too." She tried to tease him, and he still laughed despite how forced it must have sounded. "I'll, uh, see you around? Okay?"

"Yeah." He mumbled back, the tense silence returned. How did they always find themselves never being able to say what they actually wanted to say to one another? Jonathan could sense her disappointment (and may or may not have mistaken it for annoyance. Or worse, anger) because he called to her as she got up. "Hey Nancy?"

"Yeah?" She turned around, the last small piece of hope inside of her praying not to be crushed.

"We're good, right?" Jonathan took a pause, looking nervous as he licked his lips. "Friends?"

Nancy softened at the look on his face and nodded, willing herself to give him a real smile that she hoped didn't look sad as she paused. "Yeah, of course. Friends." Just friends. She gave him one last look and smile before walking away, scolding herself for getting her hopes up. But a part of her was just happy to have him in her life now.

She was, however, racking her brain as she walked back towards the school, pulling her books out. Should she wait even longer? What was she even waiting for? The day he realized he didn't want to be just friends? What if that never came? She contemplated for a moment as she walked through the school doors if she should be the one to say something to him, but she'd have no idea where to even start. 'Hey I know you just got your brother back and you're beyond busy with that and not only that but we're both suffering from some

major PTSD here but I have a hunch you like me because you always look like you say you're going to but never actually say it but I think you should because I like you too'?

Before she could give it anymore thought, a hand tugged on her arm as she passed by the lockers. "Hey, Nance."

She turned around to just see it was only Steve who caught up to her. Of course it was Steve, he was always there. "Oh, hey Steve. What's up?" She hoped she still didn't look disappointed.

"I just-" He pulled her aside in the middle of the busy hallway as kids quickly made their way to class. "I wanted to apologize about earlier. I know I came on kind of strong about hanging out today so we don't have to if you don't want to-" He started as the second bell rang, signaling you had about another minute before you were actually late to class.

"Hey, it's okay. Don't worry about it." She said hurriedly, eyeing him for a moment before she was actually rushing to class. "I'll see you after school?" She said as she slowly without really thinking the decision through as she started to walk away. This didn't mean anything, did it? She'd given Jonathan three weeks now, it's not like she was choosing Steve. Was she?

"Wait, really?" She didn't miss how Steve was grinning.

"Yeah. Only if you let me get to class on time though." She said, caving just a little as she started to walk away.

"Whatever you want Nancy!" He shouted down the hallway after her.

A small smile played on her lips all the way from the hallway to her seat in class, part of her still trying to decide how she should feel about Jonathan now. Despite how excited she wanted to be about later though, her smile fell when she thought about how she'd rather be spending the afternoon with Jonathan instead.

**Author's Note:**

so...part 2?? :)